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For immediate release

Argonne attains ISO 9001, 14001 certifications

Argonne, Ill. (July 28, 2009) – The U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Argonne National Laboratory has been certified to ISO 9001 and ISO 14001 international standards for business practices and environmental management, respectively, after nearly two years of work on the part of hundreds of employees.

"Our notice of certification was validation from a third-party that we have built and implemented a management system firmly based on worldwide best practices," said Steve Richardson, Argonne's Deputy Director for Operations and Chief Operations Officer. "Our goals continue to be to make Argonne the place where people want to work long-term; where funding institutions want to invest because they have confidence that the lab will spend their dollars wisely; and to continually ensure that Argonne processes remain well within accepted management practices."

Independent, third-party auditors from NSF International visited Argonne for two weeks in March and May to determine if the research laboratory was complying with the principles and standards established by the International Organization for Standardization necessary to qualify for the two certifications. The auditors found that the laboratory was indeed in compliance.

The ISO 9001 certification marks the first time a DOE national laboratory's business practices have been certified. Attainment of the ISO certifications stem from Argonne's goal to develop a Laboratory Management System (LMS), a new process to operate the laboratory more effectively. During the initial LMS process, ISO standards were used for guidance.

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"Under LMS, any Argonne employee can go the lab's internal LMS website and see how we do business, with roles and responsibilities clearly identified," Richardson said. "ISO certification signifies completion of the first phase of our LMS journey. Argonne is not stopping there. Indeed, we have built a solid foundation that will enable ongoing improvement."

Based in Geneva, Switzerland, the International Organization for Standardization, or ISO, is the world's largest developer and publisher of International Standards. ISO is a network of the national standards institutes of 161 countries. Founded in 1947, the organization promulgates worldwide proprietary industrial and commercial standards.

Argonne National Laboratory seeks solutions to pressing national problems in science and technology. The nation's first national laboratory, Argonne conducts leading-edge basic and applied scientific research in virtually every scientific discipline. Argonne researchers work closely with researchers from hundreds of companies, universities, and federal, state and municipal agencies to help them solve their specific problems, advance America's scientific leadership and prepare the nation for a better future. With employees from more than 60 nations, Argonne is managed by UChicago Argonne, LLC for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science.